

MEETING SUMMARY
FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FMAC) MEETING
Michigan United Conservation Clubs of Michigan
2101 Wood Street, Lansing
Wednesday, August 1, 2007
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

FMAC Members Present

Mr. William Cook, Michigan State University Extension
Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging
Mr. Dan Keathley, Michigan State University
Mr. William (Bill) Bobier, Earthscape Resource Management
Ms. Erin McDonough, MUCC
Mr. Gordon Wenk, MDA

FMAC Delegate Present

Mr. Steve Shine, MDA

FMAC Members Absent

Ms. Lynne Boyd, Chair, Department of Natural Resources
Mr. Bill Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Ms. Anne Woiwode, Sierra Club
Mr. Joel Blohm, Great Northern Lumber of Michigan
Mr. Thomas Dunn, American Motorcycle Association
Mr. Desmond Jones, Michigan Tree Farm System
Dr. Margaret (Peg) Gale, Michigan Technological University
Mr. Frank Ruswick, Department of Environmental Quality
Ms. Susan Holben, MEDC
Mr. George Berghorn, Michigan Forest Products Council
Ms. Rachel Kuntzsch, Heart of the Lakes

FMAC Committee Advisors Absent

Ms. Leanne Marten, USDA Forest Service

Public Attendees/Guests

Ms. Judy McReavy, Roscommon
Mr. Bob McReavy, Roscommon

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present

Ms. Cara Boucher
Mr. David Price
Dr. Donna LaCourt
Ms. Kerry Gray
Ms. Kim Korbecki

WELCOME

Dr. Donna LaCourt, representing **Chair Lynne Boyd**, called the Forest Management Advisory Committee (Committee or FMAC) meeting to order at 1:12 p.m. **Dr. LaCourt** welcomed the Committee and public present. **Dr. LaCourt** announced there are two new appointees to the Committee; **Mr. George Berghorn**, Michigan Forest Products Council, and **Ms. Rachel Kuntzsch**, Heart of the Lakes.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. LaCourt reviewed the agenda, and asked for comments.

MOTION: **Mr. Warren Suchovsky** moved to adopt the agenda; supported by
 Dr. Dan Keathley.
 Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. LaCourt asked Committee members and public present to introduce themselves. Two members of the public were present; **Ms. Judy McReavy** and **Mr. Bob McReavy** from Roscommon. .

ADOPTION OF JULY 11, 2007 MEETING SUMMARY

Dr. LaCourt asked for comments from the Committee; none.

MOTION: **Dr. Keathley** moved to adopt the meeting summary of the July 11, 2007 FMAC meeting; supported by **Mr. Suchovsky**.
 Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. McReavy stated her and **Mr. McReavy** had attended this meeting just to observe.

JULY FMAC FIELD TOUR

Mr. Suchovsky commented he thought the field tour showed an excellent illustration of the problems in the Roscommon area, and the interface between the forest management and other uses. He would like to see the Committee begin to generate solutions to these problems. He went on to say there will be increasingly more important land management issues the Committee will be faced with. **Mr. Suchovsky** stated the Committee needs to set priorities and discuss viewpoints on how to deal with these problems, including suggestions and recommendations from the public. He commented that DNR policy has become the accepted way of doing things; FMAC can make suggestions to the DNR over time that could help in forest management.

Dr. Keathley commented he was very impressed with the DNR staff and foresters and how they were applying forest management and silvicultural prescriptions to the land. He commented on their enthusiasm, effective way of explaining the situation in the area, management techniques, and careful thought that is put into treatments. **Mr. Steve Shine** was also very impressed with how staff explained criteria for using particular management techniques in the area. **Dr. LaCourt** stated the Committee can begin to address interface techniques with the public, and asked for suggestions on how to accomplish it.

Mr. Suchovsky suggested an Ad-hoc Committee and special presentations, taking a good look at landscape management, considering how compartment reviews are conducted, and possibly looking at broader landscape techniques related to the community with public input.

Mr. Dave Price stated the planning process for regional planning will help in regards to looking at areas from a landscape standpoint, and how it relates to the management perspective.

Dr. LaCourt stated to this point there is a suggestion on the table for special presentations to set groundwork for the Committee to move forward with their expertise. Committee agreed. **Mr. Suchovsky** suggested having someone give a presentation that can educate the Committee from a landscape architectural point of view, related to community needs and long-range planning.

Dr. Keathley commented most public complaints regard aesthetics. He suggested the public group in Roscommon would be a good group to work with. He would like to have the public come in and tell the DNR how they would like the State Forest land managed within the objectives of the DNR. Then you could see if there is common ground between the DNR and the public.

Mr. McReavy stated in talking with the public in his area, and after years of circulating petitions, the biggest concern is what the DNR is going to do about the forest. He commented it wasn't as much of a problem ten years ago, but now the clear-cutting has been done closer to the roads, closer to citizen's backyards, and in multiple counties, resulting in massive destruction. This has created a general public distrust of the DNR.

Mr. Bill Bobier asked **Mr. McReavy** to explain the clear-cutting that has taken place in the area. **Mr. McReavy** responded there has been an 8 x 8 square mile area, along with some small private areas and other massive areas around the county. The county consists of rolling terrain with some sandy areas, but also many areas with good soil. There is a mixture of hardwoods which are supported by good tree growth and re-growth. He added there has been a petition created to address the situation.

Mr. Bobier asked **Mr. McReavy** the content of the petition; **Mr. McReavy** answered the main content is to control clear-cutting. He went on to say the public felt the Committee tour of Roscommon was directed to areas around the heart of the problem. The public wanted to take the Committee into the areas they feel is the problem.

Dr. LaCourt stated when the public requested visiting sites that were not scheduled on the tour, **Chair Boyd** polled the Committee to see if they would like to visit these sites, but the consensus of the Committee was to move on with the scheduled tour. **Mr. Suchovsky** reported he had spent several hours the following week visiting areas **Mr. McReavy** was referring to; he saw a good mix of hardwoods and discovered the soils tend to be on the richer side.

Dr. LaCourt reported so far the Committee had expressed an interest in moving forward on this issue, special presentations on landscape management, further dialog with the public group around Roscommon to discuss how they would like forest management handled, general support of silviculture, and the need to look at other management processes. She requested the Committee move on to means to accomplish this.

Mr. Bill Cook commented he doesn't feel the Committee needs to hear more on landscape management. He stated the DNR lacks in defining management within stands to the point where the forester is not sure of the context of the landscape the stand sits in. **Mr. Cook** said the DNR should make sure Managers are thinking in regard to landscape issues when conducting compartment reviews.

Dr. Keathley expressed the need to redefine silviculture in the Roscommon area, and stated he would like to go on another tour with the public organizing what areas to tour. He suggested then talking with the public regarding how the DNR could have accomplished the clear-cutting differently. This would give the Committee the opportunity to see if they are covering both objective (public and DNR), and to see things from both perspectives.

Mr. Bobier agreed with **Mr. Cook's** viewpoint; he stated it is the full landscape view, not the parcel landscape view that needs to be considered. He went on to say the DNR should encourage private landowners to manage their own lands in preparation of clear-cutting in their area.

Mr. Suchovsky commented there are other aspects which need to be addressed, such as motorized recreation damage. He reported on his trip after the last Committee meeting he saw a number of resource problems that should be considered within the whole problem, i.e. resource damage, noise, and soil degradation.

Mr. McReavy suggested the DNR should notify property owners within 100 yards of where clear-cutting will be occurring, and hold meetings where they can show the property owners where clear-cutting is scheduled and get public comment. **Mr. Cook** commented public meetings are already being held and the public do not attend. **Ms. McReavy** brought up the hunting aspect of clear-cutting; she reported the clear-cutting is eliminating forest and therefore eliminating hunters, which is hurting the economy in communities in the area. **Mr. Keathley** responded during the tour the DNR staff showed they are looking at ways to maintain wildlife during the clear-cutting process.

Ms. McReavy commented the public feels the DNR is ruining their economy. **Ms. Erin McDonough** stated she has heard the other side; the DNR is not clear-cutting often enough to promote new growth as quickly as is needed. **Mr. McReavy** reported he has often been asked by DNR staff "why are you (the public) against clear-cutting"? He stated the public is not against clear-cutting but they feel the DNR should work with a more staggered plan; massive clear-cutting is causing too much devastation in the area.

Dr. LaCourt stated she admires the public for their dedication and commitment in using the public comment process. She went on to say she would like to move the issue forward to accomplish something; attempts have been made to meet with the Roscommon groups, but the meetings have never taken place. She asked the Committee to make a commitment to get together again with the Roscommon group to work together on one or two target items.

Mr. Suchovsky suggested the first step should be to visit with the Roscommon group again, as **Dr. Keathley** had declared earlier. **Mr. Bobier** stated he would like to see a succession of aerial photographs, as far back as is on record, to see the changes that have occurred in the area. **Mr. Cook** said he would like to see the Management Plan for the Roscommon Management Unit to see exactly what is taking place in the area.

Dr. LaCourt stated the Committee can make a commitment to communicate more effectively with the Roscommon community, and asked for volunteers to form a subcommittee to accomplish this. **Mr. Suchovsky** volunteered to be a member of the subcommittee; **Dr. Keathley** commented he would prefer to take another tour of the area first then consider the formation of a subcommittee. **Ms. McReavy** questioned if the Committee would want to meet with the snowmobile group, also. **Dr. LaCourt** responded it could be a component, and stated she would work with **Mr. Suchovsky** and **Dr. Keathley** to set an agenda for the next field tour, with the idea of a morning tour and afternoon meeting.

Mr. Suchovsky showed the Committee a few slides he took while on his personal tour of the Roscommon area.

TOP ISSUES FACING MICHIGAN'S FOREST RESOURCE

Dr. LaCourt reported **Ms. Kerry Gray** and **Ms. McDonough** would be taking the lead on this topic.

Ms. Gray distributed a handout from the June Committee meeting, to give the Committee an idea of the topics that were discussed. Ms. Gray discussed the handout and the process that

was used to generate these goals and ideas. The handout listed the top three items the Committee chose to focus on, as well as the following list of goals:

- Ensuring a long-term, stable, accessible timber supply;
- Availability and location;
- Make accessibility known to potential issues

At the June meeting the Committee brainstormed the following action items to achieve the three goals listed above:

- Identifying gaps in knowledge;
- Working with Forest Finance Authority;
- Michigan branding/marketing;
- Public perception/education;
- Identifying unique areas to preserve;
- Economic analysis of timber for various markets (cellulose), bio-fuels, including exports and imports;
- Knowing resources and developing GIS for the state;
- Threat analysis to sustainable forestry;
- Social/economic trends analysis, and;
- Communicating issues with other organizations, agencies, etc.

Mr. Bobier commented that bio-fuel is important for the Committee to address; **Mr. Suchovsky** agreed. **Dr. LaCourt** suggested moving to agenda item VII, "Woody Biomass Harvesting GAFMPs", then return to agenda item VI, "Top issues facing Michigan's Forest Resource".

WOODY BIOMASS HARVESTING GAFMPS

Dr. LaCourt distributed two handouts to the Committee; "Biomass Harvesting on Forest Management Sites in Minnesota", and "Woody Biomass Harvesting for Managing Brushlands and Open Lands in Minnesota". **Dr. LaCourt** suggested that the Committee revisit the Generally Accepted Forest Management Practices to add another category for biomass harvesting. **Mr. Cook** stated that this would not fit into the GAFMPs; they are more guidelines and should be a stand along document. **Ms. Boucher** stated that it could fit within the DNR's Stand Retention Guidelines.

Dr. LaCourt stated that as an agency the DNR believes we need to put guidelines in place that can be used across the state, by all landowners. **Dr. LaCourt** reported currently in the state there are harvest areas that are specifically for electrical needs, some for co-generation, and the issue is the degree in which it will expand. **Mr. Cook** stated there are several hundreds of thousands of cords being used right now for electricity. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented that from the perspective of a logger, guidance is needed. **Mr. Bobier** stated that biomass is coming up fast and there should be guidelines in place.

Dr. LaCourt stated bio-fuel is a project the Committee has expressed a desire to work on, and suggested that the Committee review the Minnesota guidelines to begin to develop guidelines for Michigan. **Mr. Cook** commented he wasn't sure what **Dr. LaCourt** was asking from the Committee; they would not be able to create a document like the Minnesota guidelines. **Dr. LaCourt** responded she had provided the Minnesota guidelines as an informational item so the Committee would have time to review and perhaps revisit at a future meeting. She would like the Committee to consider if it should look for funding to develop this sort of guideline for Michigan, or use the Minnesota guidelines as a model to begin developing Michigan guidelines.

Mr. Suchovsky stated he is in favor of looking at this issue; many other organizations are already in the early stages of becoming educated about this issue. **Mr. Keathley** commented that we need to understand where biomass fits into the portfolio of forest resources uses (i.e. where and how does this fit into all uses- recreation, timber supply, pulpwood). **Mr. Bobier** commented he has a sense that biomass should be addressed sooner, rather than later, coupled with carbon and sustainability.

Dr. LaCourt stated the group is expressing they want to understand how biomass fits into the big forest resource picture. **Dr. LaCourt** requested the Committee review the Minnesota documents, and committed the DNR to produce a draft to choose items of a broader variety for the Committee to focus on. She stated the Committee could revisit the topic of woody biomass at an upcoming meeting.

Dr. LaCourt asked the Committee to return to agenda item VI, "Top Issues Facing Michigan's Forest Resource".

TOP ISSUES FACING MICHIGAN'S FOREST RESOURCE (continued)

Ms. McDonough commented it would be worth looking at the action items on the list to see if there are other items the Committee would like to work on. **Mr. Shine** stated "Michigan branding and marketing" might be a good issue to look at with the diverse group of people in the Committee. **Ms. McDonough** stated that at the June meeting **Mr. George Berghorn** stated that the Michigan Forest Products Council is currently working on a Michigan forest products branding strategy.

Dr. LaCourt asked the Committee to pick the top two action items to focus on; **Mr. Wenk** responded he felt they already had; guidelines for bio-fuel, and public perception. He commented they should try to focus on these two issues at the next two meetings, and try to figure out recommendations to submit to the Natural Resources Commission. (Editor's note: Committee recommendations are submitted to the Director.)

UPDATE OF PROPOSED MANAGEMENT AREA CRITERIA IN THE ECOREGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

Mr. David Price reported he had talked with the Committee previously regarding the proposal of the ecoregional planning process. A decision was made by the Statewide Council (SWC) in June to proceed. A proposal was made to integrate the management area concept to strictly address management of the state forests, with a broader and more strategic landscape-level management plan to address resource goals across ownerships, and would provide direction to the regional forest management plan. **Mr. Price** went on to say as the DNR implements this, the entire picture feeds into earlier discussions; planning will help to get more specificity in the planning process. The goal is to provide a landscape-level perspective to operational decisions the DNR is making at the unit level. They are currently proposing to take a list of criteria which they have started to develop, that when applied to the DNR ownership, will allow the determination of management areas

Mr. Price reported the items on the handout provided to the Committee will be presented to the SWC on Tuesday, August 7, and then will be presented to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) on September 13, 2007. Items that will be presented are as follows:

- **Ownership Criteria**

- Adjacency to other ownerships (Federal, DNR, Private);

- Percentage of Landscape in Different Ownerships (Corporate, Public);

Consideration (where possible) of size (multiple compartments); and
Areas with existing vegetative management plans (i.e. Pigeon River Country, Kirtland's Warbler Areas, Military Lands)

- **Social/Economic Criteria**

Proximity to wood product markets;
Proximity to population areas and major transportation arteries;
Trends in recreation demands; and
Known historical/cultural sites (with buffer)

- **Ecological Criteria**

Similar site potential (Guide to Forest Communities and Habitat Types of Michigan, soils, landform);
Historic vegetation (Michigan Natural Features Inventory – Vegetation of Michigan circa 1800);
Current vegetation (compositional and structural representation);
Wildlife species distribution pattern (from the Wildlife Action Plan) for select species (i.e. elk, moose, or Kirtland's Warbler);
Known ecologically sensitive sites (with buffer);
Existing forest connectivity or fragmentation (i.e. The Nature Conservancy – Matrix Forest Analysis); and
Analyses by Ecological Classification System (i.e. D. Albert's Regional Landscape Ecosystems of Michigan, or D. Cleland's National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units)

Mr. Price reported the DNR has come up with an example of how criteria, as currently proposed, would be applied to produce theoretical management areas for the state. The Northern Lower Peninsula example is already set to be presented to the SWC; the Eastern Upper Peninsula and Western Upper Peninsula still need some work. The intention at this time is after SWC approval to post the plan on the DNR website, provide a stakeholders guide, do a press release, get input from the public, and an Ecoregional Team mailing to the stakeholders to get input from the public. A presentation will be made to the NRC at the September meeting.

Mr. Price stated the focus right now is on criteria; there will be additional opportunities in the future while writing the plans to go back for public comment. After completion of the plan the DNR will be able to provide better guidance to field staff on how work should be related to landscape needs. **Ms. Boucher** commented the earlier statement made on the difficulty of field staff to link stands to larger landscape needs is part of what the DNR is trying to accomplish with the proposed management area criteria. This will help to find balance in specific compartments and will provide landscape level analysis for staff to be able to make decision at the unit level.

Mr. Wenk asked if they are presenting to the SWC to just seek approval to move forward.

Mr. Price responded the hope is to get meaningful feedback on type of criteria the DNR needs to use. The current time-frame they are aiming for is to get everything done by mid-September (SWC, NRC, and public comment). Although public comment does not need to be completed by September, the team wants to be moving forward by the Forest Certification audit in October. The SWC wants to use the NRC as a forum for public input, not as an action item, only as an informational item. **Dr. LaCourt** commented she would make sure the **McReavys** are sent a plan ahead of time, prior to the public comment period.

Mr. Price reported an Ecoregional Resource Plan will be written primarily by DNR staff with collaboration by Regional Advisory Teams, which will be long-standing teams, and throughout cross-agencies. He stated DNR Wildlife and Forest, Mineral and Fire Management are co-authors with input from other DNR staff, such as Fisheries, Law Enforcement and Parks and Recreation. **Mr. Suchovsky** requested a list of the Eco-Teams. **Dr. LaCourt** agreed to send a list of teams to the Committee.

Mr. Cook questioned how private ownerships will be assessed. **Mr. Price** responded the DNR's intent is to look at ecoregional goals across ownerships, with opportunities to address these through private land programs or county extensions. The DNR wants to provide a venue for everyone to grow at the same time so everyone can work toward the common goal. **Ms. Boucher** commented the DNR has a number of programs that operate on private lands; staff would be promoting the DNR's management techniques, although private landowners would have other options because it is their land. **Mr. Cook** stated a method is needed to assess what private landowners are doing, especially when it involves cross-ownership.

Mr. Suchovsky commented a lot of the large investment purchases, especially in the Upper Peninsula, have a large turn-over rate; how do we incorporate the plan into long-term partnering? **Mr. Price** responded the current focus is on state forest plans; for immediate purposes there is a need to concentrate on state forest areas first. Then the DNR plans to work on broader plans which will affect other ownerships. **Dr. LaCourt** stated she would see that **Mr. Price's** handouts were sent to the absent Committee members.

OTHER

Dr. LaCourt introduced **Ms. Boucher** to discuss the handout "Opportunity to Comment on Department of Natural Resources Application for Pesticide Derogation (Temporary Exemption) to the Forest Stewardship Council International". **Ms. Boucher** stated the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) both have prohibited chemicals.

Because of this, the DNR must request Derogation, which the DNR is currently doing. The DNR must get comments from the stakeholders; if anyone is interested in commenting there is a link on the DNR Certification website. **Ms. Boucher** went on to say the request for Derogation is only for all certified state forest lands. Derogation, if approved, is valid for five years. **Dr. LaCourt** asked the Committee to forward this information on to their constituents; the DNR is looking forward to public comment.

FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

Woody Biomass/Bio-fuel

NEXT MEETING

Field Tour of the Roscommon area led by the public who live in the area. **Dr. Keathley** and **Mr. Suchovsky** will be working with **Dr. LaCourt** to set an agenda. **Dr. LaCourt** will also be working on getting aerial views of the Roscommon area, as well as state forest composition and state boundary lines.

Wednesday, September 12, 2007

DNR Roscommon Operations Service Center (tentative)

8717 N. Roscommon Road, Roscommon

9:00 a.m. (field tour begins) – 4:00 p.m. (business meeting to follow field tour)

ADJOURNMENT

The Forest Management Advisory Committee meeting adjourned at 3:49 p.m.